

ly important when the lands along the designated segments are predominantly privately owned. Where private property interests are at stake, a formal study should be an absolute requirement before Federal action is taken that may infringe such rights.

I believe that to protect the integrity and viability of the National Park System, completion of feasibility studies should be a prerequisite for establishment of any new unit of the National Park System. Any component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers

System that is administered by the National Park Service becomes a unit of the National Park System. I urge the Congress to adhere to the requirement for such studies in the future.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,  
May 24, 1991.

*Note: S. 248, approved May 24, was assigned Public Law No. 102-50.*

## Remarks at the Yale University Commencement Ceremony in New Haven, Connecticut

May 27, 1991

Thank you very, very much. President Schmidt and members of the faculty, and the Yale community, fellows of the Yale Corporation, and especially with congratulations to my fellow honorands, it is an honor to be here today. Mayor Daniels, it's nice to be back in the city. And most importantly, to the graduating students, congratulate each and every one of you. May I single out Yale's band. They've cleaned up for today, and they've never been better under Mr. Tom Duffy. Thank you, sir. And thank you for the warm welcome. *Si res prehensio en cano est non oves sic vacio*. That means, if you're holding up the sign, you can't throw eggs. [Laughter]

I remember my own commencement. Like so many of my classmates, I'd come to Yale fresh from war, ready to make up for "lost time." I remember our impatience and our optimism. And we sensed upcoming adventure. I imagine it's the same today for all of you. It's almost as if life is about to begin, that is, if the commencement speech ever ends. [Laughter]

Twenty-nine years ago, President Kennedy stood right here, and my dad was honored with him. And he said, "I have the best of all worlds: a Yale degree and a Harvard education." [Laughter] He had it wrong. I've got the best of all worlds: a Yale education and a Yale degree.

My day was no different. There's an ex-

citement in the air. And Barbara and I spent a good part of our senior year thinking about, literally, becoming farmers. We talked about life on the land and rising early and working hard and raising a crop and a family. And we looked into the finances of running a farm. In the end, we decided against the whole idea. We realized that when it came to pigs and chickens and cattle or corn, we didn't know the first thing about farming.

So, of course, there was only one alternative: I went west and became an oilman. [Laughter] The very day after the ceremony like this one, I traded the familiar surroundings of this beautiful old campus for the dust and grit and searing heat of the Lone Star State.

Odessa, Texas, became my world. And yet, far beyond 37 Hillhouse Avenue where Barbara and I lived or the Flatlands of West Texas, change rocked the whole world in ways that would affect us all for more than 40 years. On June 20th, 1948—my graduation day—the United Nations sent out its first peacekeeping force, 49 men from the United States and 6 other nations, to bring the promise of peace to the Middle East. And on that day, the Soviet Union tried to clamp down on the free sectors of Berlin. The Berlin blockade had begun. And on

that day, Congress, after an all-night session, passed a bill to help the nations of war-torn Europe. That package would become known, as we all know, as the Marshall plan.

Today's world—your world—is every bit as astonishing. Back in my day, opportunity knocked. And yours, your pager beeps.

We have seen in 2 short years the end of a long era of cold war and conflict. The Iron Curtain collapsed—it's gone, the wall is down—and with it the myth of an ideology called communism. On the barren ground that once separated East and West, the democratic idea sprouted anew.

As a nation, we can take great pride in this triumph. It vindicates more than 40 years of American vigilance—a lesson learned on the battlefields of Europe and the seas of the South Pacific—that this nation could no longer pursue a policy of "splendid isolation."

The democratic renaissance in Central and Eastern Europe, the blossoming of democracy here in the Americas, the emerging consensus on the African Continent that democracy is the road to development, none of this would have taken place if America had turned inward, away from the challenges of a new world. So today, as we seek to promote freedom and democracy and human rights, as we seek to strengthen stability within the international community, an America confident enough to engage the world remains our best hope for peace, security, and shared prosperity.

Look in every corner of the globe and you will find that the American example has consequences. When we reach out, we offer more than cars or grain or MTV. We exemplify an ideal, an ideal that conquers circumstance and suspicion, that conquers despots and empowers people. Some argue that a nation as moral and just as ours should not taint itself by dealing with nations less moral, less just. But this counsel offers up self-righteousness draped in a false morality. You do not reform a world by ignoring it.

East Asia is a case in point. Today, this dynamic region plays an important role in the world economy. As it has grown more prosperous, it has also grown more free. Driven forward by the engine of economic

growth and trade, especially with the U.S., South Korea and Taiwan have shed their once-authoritarian rule in favor of democracy and freer trade.

This same approach guides our policy towards the People's Republic of China, home to fully one-fifth of the world's people. China easily can affect the stability of the Asian-Pacific region and, therefore, affect the entire world's peace and prosperity. The Chinese play a central role in working to resolve the conflict in Cambodia and relax tensions on the Korean Peninsula. China has a voice now in the multinational organizations. And its votes in the United Nations Security Council against Iraq's brutal aggression helped us forge the broad coalition that brought us victory in the Gulf. And so, when we find opportunities to cooperate with China, we will explore them. When problems arise with China's behavior, we will take appropriate action.

After the tragedy of Tiananmen, the United States was the first nation to condemn the use of violence against the peacefully demonstrating people of Beijing. We were the first to guarantee the rights of Chinese students studying on campuses across the country, including here at Yale. The United States was the first nation to impose sanctions, and we are now the last, alone among the Western democracies, to keep those original sanctions in place. At every high-level meeting with the Chinese Government, U.S. officials reiterate our position on human rights violations.

Unfair trade is also high on our agenda. Just last month, we cited China under the trade rules of a special 301 for pirating U.S. copyrights and patents. And for the sake of national security, we will ban technologies and equipment to any Chinese company found to violate rules outlawing transfer of missile technologies.

We will continue to advance our interests and ideals: for free and fair trade, for broader democratization, for respect for human rights throughout China. Let me be clear: As a member of the United Nations, China is bound by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. We will hold China to the obligations that it has freely accepted.

And finally, we continue urging China to

exercise restraint in its weapons exports. Our recent experience with Iraq proves how dangerous the deadly trade can be. And very soon, I will announce significant new steps that we can take to control arms exports to the entire Middle East. Every nation must play a part in this effort. That's why we urge the Chinese Government to abide by the letter and spirit of international agreements on missile technology controls, and to do what 141 other nations have already done: sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

And this is one way that the United States can be a catalyst for positive change. This week, I will employ another by proposing formally that MFN trade status continue for China. This policy has generated considerable controversy. Some critics have said: Revoke MFN—or endanger it with sweeping conditions—to censure China. Cut our ties, and isolate it. We are told this is a principled policy, a moral thing to do. This advice is not new. It's not wise. It is not in the best interests of our country, the United States. And in the end, in spite of noble and best intentions, it is not moral.

First, MFN is [not] special. It is not a favor. It is the ordinary basis of trade worldwide. Second, MFN is a means to bring the influence of the outside world to bear on China. Critics who attack MFN today act as if the point is to punish China, as if hurting China's economy will somehow help the cause of privatization and human rights.

The real point is to pursue a policy that has the best chance of changing Chinese behavior. If we withdrew MFN or imposed conditions that would make trade impossible, we would punish South China, in particular, Guangdong Province, the very region where free market reform and the challenge to central authority are the strongest. Right now, there's an estimated two million Chinese who are working and proving that privatization can work—all in South China. Withdraw MFN, and their jobs would be in jeopardy. In addition, endangering MFN would deal a body blow to Hong Kong, the bastion of freedom and free trade in the Far East.

But the most compelling reason to renew MFN and remain engaged in China is not

economic, it's not strategic, but moral. It is right to export the ideals of freedom and democracy to China. It is right to encourage Chinese students to come to the United States and for talented American students to go to China. It is wrong to isolate China if we hope to influence China.

For two decades after the Communists seized power in 1949, the Western world followed a policy of isolation toward China. This period proved to be among the most brutal episodes in Chinese history, a nightmare of anguish and death and suffering that will scar the soul of China for decades to come.

So, it comes down to the strength of our belief in the power of the democratic idea. If we pursue a policy that cultivates contacts with the Chinese people, promotes commerce to our benefit, we can help create a climate for democratic change.

No nation on Earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services while stopping foreign ideas at the border. Just as the democratic idea has transformed nations on every continent, so, too, change will inevitably come to China.

This nation's foreign policy has always been more than simply an expression of American interests; it's an extension of American ideals. This moral dimension of American policy requires us to remain active, engaged in the world. Many times, that means trying to chart a moral course through a world of lesser evils. That's the real world, not black and white. Very few moral absolutes. Enormous potential for error and embarrassment. But all are part of the risks that we willingly take to advance the American ideal.

Many times in the past 40 years, people have encouraged us to adopt a policy of righteous isolationism, but we remained engaged. We cannot advance principles if we curl up into a defensive ball. We cannot transform a world if we hide from its unpleasant realities. We can advance our cherished ideals only by extending our hand, showing our best sides, sticking patiently to our values, even if we risk rejection.

Look at the way American encouragement and the American example, the power of the American example, is paying

off in Taiwan and Korea. We will have no leverage, we will not be able to advance our cause or resist repression, if we pull back and declare that China is simply too impure a place for us. We want to promote positive change in the world through the force of our example, not simply profess our purity. We want to advance the cause of freedom, not just snub nations that aren't yet wholly free.

Let me close today with some modest pieces of advice. First, understand that you often will confront moral ambiguity. There will come times when you will have difficulty distinguishing between good guys and bad guys. When these situations arise, identify your principles and stick by them. Stick by them even when people jeer, when people urge you to find a quick and easy out. If you remain patient and true to yourself, you can't go wrong. Second, remember

that the corner of the world that matters most is one right here at home, the one you share with friends and family. And finally, your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. And take care to make it count.

To all the graduates of the class of '91 who now join me as proud alumni of this great university, congratulations, good luck to you, and may God bless the United States of America.

*Note: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Yale University Quadrangle. In his remarks he referred to Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., president of the university; John Daniels, mayor of New Haven; and Thomas C. Duffy, director of the Yale University bands.*

## The President's News Conference in Kennebunkport, Maine May 28, 1991

### *President's Health*

Q. Mr. President, could we get your reaction—

Q. How about the water at the White House? Do you want to talk about that now?

*The President.* The water at the White House?

Q. Yes.

*The President.* What about it?

Q. They're apparently checking it.

Q. It's being checked to see if this is the thyroid problem.

Q. They're saying that possibly you and Mrs. Bush and the dog, having gotten these autoimmune problems, that perhaps it's something to do with the water.

*The President.* Maybe the air. I don't know—

Q. You didn't know about it?

*The President.* No.

Q. Did you know it was being checked?

*The President.* Not checked. I just heard something on the television. I could hardly believe it.

The odds against two people in the family having—the doctor told me, the thyroid specialist, one of the classic thyroid men, Colonel Burman, known for his expertise, told me the odds are one in three million. But many people live in the same house together, one of whom has thyroid—so I'm not going to lose confidence in the water at the White House until we know a little more about this.

Q. How about two people and the dog?

*The President.* I feel very comfortable in looking into it. Well, two people and the dog, that's about one in 20 million. [*Laughter*]

Q. How are you feeling today?

*The President.* Good. Feel good.

Q. How about the water at the Vice Presidential mansion?

*The President.* Well, it tasted good to me, but I don't have any reason to believe that had anything to do with my thyroid. But let them look into it.

Q. Have you been gaining weight up here, sir?